(c) to what extent Government would try to institute a new system for giving promotions to all officers;

(d) whether it is a fact that the marks given by training institutes would count for more than ACR gradings; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS (SHRI SURESH PACHOURI): (a) There is no proposal to scrap the system of Annual Confidential Reports as a basis for promotions and empanelment.

(b) Does not arise in view of reply to (a) above.

(c) There is no proposal to institute a new system for giving promotions to all officers.

(d) No, Sir.

(e) Does not arise.

Joint ventures to train officials

3799. SHRI S.M. LALJAN BASHA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have got in touch with foreign universities to offer joint ventures to train official who are already in service;

(b) if so, the names of foreign universities with which Government is in touch to train Indian bureaucrats;

(c) to what extent, it would help in making out officials more efficient and responsive to the needs of our people;

(d) whether Government propose to review such proposals; and

(e) the reasons for going in for help from foreign universities?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS (SHRI SURESH PACHOURI): (a) to (e) The Government of India has a scheme under which serving officers are nominated for long term and short term training in foreign universities. Among such universities are:—

1. University of Syracuse, USA
2. University of Birmingham, UK

3. Institute of Development Studies, UK

4. Institute of Social Studies, the Hague

5. International Center for Promotion of Enterprises, Slovenia

6. Asian Institute of Management, Philipines

The Government has also decided to introduce mandatory mid career training for IAS officers. In order to assist in the design and delivery of these mid career programmes, the Government of India propose to invite offers from a wide range of leading institutes, globally. Selections would be made from out of offers that are received.

The major advantage in seeking offers globally is to ensure that we are able to use the best capabilities available in the field of public policy and management and that our civil services are second to none in the world.

Imbalance in regional development

3800. SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that development activities in various regions are not even and are resulting in regional imbalance; and

(b) if so, the details, with allocation made for various developmental activities during the last five years, year-wise and region-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING (SHRI M.V. RAJASEKHARAN): (a) There are disparities in the levels of development of different regions owing to differnces in resource endowment, level of infrastructure and socio-economic parameters.

(b) Various Central Sector and Centrally Sponsored Schemes are in operation across the country. In addition, in 2003-04, the Rashtriya Sam Vikas Yojana was launched to provide for expedited development in identified areas. This initiative has three components, namely, Special Plan for Bihar with a provision of Rs. 1000 crore per year in the Tenth Plan; Special Plan for the eight districts of erstwhile Kalahandi, Bolangir and Koraput (KBK) with a provision of Rs. 250 crore per year in the Tenth Plan (earlier KBK was allocated Additional Central Assistance of Rs. 243.95 crore from 1998-99 to 2001-02 and Special Central Assistance of Rs. 200 crore in 2002-03); and the Backward Districts Initiative covering 147 districts with a provision of Rs. 15 crore per year per district for three years.